

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Innovative Office Products

#### Manufacturers Resource Center

#### Building Success One Change at a Time at Innovative Office Products

##### Client Profile:

Innovative Office Products is the leading manufacturer of ergonomic, space-saving arms and mounts for flat panel monitors, notebooks and tablet PCs. The company has 140 employees at its facility in Easton, Pennsylvania.

##### Situation:

Innovative Office Products' assembly department was experiencing excessive inventory in the assembly area, and the company needed to decrease the on-hand inventory to support daily production. The overall assembly process was too long to support the frequent short lead-time customer orders and inventory. Additionally, the production methods associated with larger batch sizes appeared to be causing a missing parts problem in the final packing area of the department. The company called upon the Manufacturers Resource Center (MRC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

##### Solution:

MRC worked with Innovative Office Products to establish a current state Value Stream Map (VSM) and identified areas of opportunity. There were dedicated machines supporting this value stream in other areas of the plant which were contributing to the extended process lead-time as well as excessive inventory. The channel machining operation was one such machine. An opportunity to create a dedicated work cell was uncovered that could be incorporated easily into this value stream and further reduce the inventory as well as process lead-time. As a result, the company designed and built a simple machine in-house that had effectively no set-up required and eliminated another large amount of inventory. They created a few possible future state value streams with the team that would participate in the Kaizen event. During the Kaizen event, the team agreed on a future state map, identified what steps needed to be taken, and noted what room was needed for the departmental layout for future additions. The final packaging area was completely redesigned to prevent the operator from processing more than one carton at a time. A scale was incorporated into the process that prevents the carton from being taped closed unless it meets the weight target. All excess materials were removed from the department. A simple PC-based system was developed to communicate to the four different process starting points that feed the Arm Assembly station to identify exactly what was needed to prevent excessive materials from being built. Assembly workstation instructions included updated preventive maintenance, and visual assurance sheets. After the Kaizen event, Innovative Office Products installed Andon Lights in the warehouse for improved visual management. After the Kaizen event, the company finalized the end cap drilling machine and incorporated it into the arm assembly value stream.

##### Results:

[www.mep.nist.gov](http://www.mep.nist.gov)



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- \* Increased productivity by 33 percent.
- \* Reduced work in process inventory by 71 percent.
- \* Reduced missing parts claims by 97 percent.
- \* Reduced floor space requirements by 51 percent.

#### **Testimonial:**

"This Value Stream is one of our highest volume areas of the assembly operations. We had MRC here to help guide us through these events, as well as discrete MRC training events before the implementation event. We are expecting the same, great results and have a more confident and dedicated team in-house to complete it on our own."

Greg Labelle , Plant Manager